

# Community Connections

*"A history of helping the people of Jacksonville."*

For almost 100 years, Community Connections has helped people in need become independent, contributing members of our community. By connecting women, children and families with the services and resources necessary to help overcome challenges and unfortunate circumstances, Community Connections restores opportunity and most importantly, hope, to those who need it most.

## Transitional housing

The Community Connections Transitional Housing programs are a haven to those who are trying to break the cycle of poverty or abuse and need some help along the way. More than offering just a safe place to live, the programs provide childcare and other essential support services for up to 24 months. It is these services – job training, career counseling and parenting programs, among others, that rebuild self-esteem and offer hope to residents and their families. With hope and belief in themselves, clients achieve goals and prepare for independence and access to permanent housing.

Community Connections served more than 380 families during 2005. Transitional housing programs are offered at these locations:

- The Florence N. Davis Center for Women and Children, located in downtown Jacksonville
- Nia Terrace, located on Jacksonville's Westside
- The Northeast Florida Housing Program, located on the Westside and in Clay County

## Housing partnerships

Community Connections has established valuable partnerships with the developers and property managers of six affordable housing communities. In these residential settings, Community Connections runs programs to strengthen adults and children.

In addition to the after-school programs described above, Community Connections' partnership programs include:

- Adult literacy
- ABE/GED instruction
- Job preparation programs



## Board of Directors

**Back row:** Michael Lenahen, Laura D'Alisera, Mary Arditti, Tami Jones, Joan Dean and Jarik Conrad

**Second Row:** Pat Brzozowski, Susan Norman, Cheryl Croft, Anne Bridgers

**Front Row:** Jennifer Lee, Brenda Titus, Mary Brennan McElroy, Charlene Taylor Hill, John Franklin & Elaine Brown

**Not pictured:** Matt Breuer, Susan Burns, Angie Coker, Arthur Graham, Tina Guyette, Patricia Hilton, Allison Korman, Millie Lopez, Mike Lukaszewski, Willie Williams



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## Looking out for children and youth

Community Connections provides children with quality, stimulating care in a safe environment. Not only is this good for the children, but it helps those parents struggling to improve themselves when they know their kids are being well cared for.

■ Florence N. Davis Child Development Center – Serving children six weeks to 12 years of age, this is a state-of-the-art childcare program. Participants in the program include homeless and low-income children.

■ After-school programs – Community Connections provides after-school programs at eight sites in Jacksonville. Offering children the opportunity to improve educational and social development, they receive supervised homework assistance, tutorial services and computer instruction. Kids also participate in enrichment programs including

Boy/Girl Scouts, 4-H Clubs, and the Jaguars' Honor Rows. A wide variety of arts and crafts, recreational activities and seasonal sports are offered at each location.

■ Summer camp – Each year, approximately 1,100 children between kindergarten age and 15 enjoy Community Connections' camp programs at eight locations. Camp includes athletic and recreational and enrichment activities.

## Help for parents

For many reasons, parents often need help, training and support in order to be good parents to their children. Community Connections runs several programs for parents:

■ Healthy Families Jacksonville is a free, voluntary family support effort that assists families at risk for child abuse or neglect. Working with families in their own homes, Healthy Families also will accept any family with a newborn living in one of Jacksonville's targeted zip code areas on the

Northside.

■ The Parents As Teachers program is a city-wide effort that helps parents become their child's first teacher.

## Connected to Jacksonville's future

Community Connections has provided services and resources to the women, children and families of Jacksonville who had nowhere else to turn for close to a century. As one of the oldest public service agencies in the area, Community Connections has evolved as times have changed in order to stay relevant to the needs of the people of Jacksonville and to help improve their circumstances so they become useful, contributing members of our community. It is Community Connections' commitment to never do less.

For more information about Community Connections, please call (904) 350-9949 or visit [www.communityconnectionsjax.org](http://www.communityconnectionsjax.org).